



## Better Promises: Hebrews 9v15-28

Jesus is King and Priest, ministering from heaven the supremely better promises of the new covenant to each of us (Heb 8v6). *What do you really long for? How does that relate to the fulfilment of these promises?*

### 1) Promised Forgiveness (v15-22)

The thing our hearts need to know more than anything is that the problem of sin has been done away with, taken out of the picture of our relationship with God. If we were under the first covenant, we would be under God's judgement. But v15 says that Jesus has sacrificed himself to set us free from the curse of unforgiveness; we have therefore already received the firm promise of our eternal inheritance.

Verses 16-22 show how very important Jesus' death is. The sacrifices and shedding of blood under the old covenant ("everything was cleansed with blood", v22) point towards this death of Jesus, which brings in the new covenant and its better promises. Just like the scapegoat on the day of atonement, Jesus has sent our sins over the horizon and taken them out of the picture. Hallelujah!

### 2) Promised Presence (v23-24)

Christ died in our place, was raised, and entered the immediate presence of God in heaven, where he now ministers on our behalf (v24). The heavenly things are purified with the better sacrifice of Jesus and with his blood (v23): that purification enables Jesus to take us by the hand and bring us into the true tabernacle, into the true holy of holies with him. God has purified you and made you heavenly! You are already seated in the heavenly realms with Christ, Paul says (Eph 2v6). If you feel out of place there know that, if you're looking to Jesus, the Father and the Son want you there and have completely clothed you/ 'kitted you out' to be in their wonderful, life-giving presence. You're completely clean. Your sin does not diminish God's love for you or weaken your welcome into his presence. *Doesn't this create a deep, deep longing to live consciously in his presence, to love him and be with him and talk with him?*

### 3) Promised Salvation (v25-28)

The second half of verse 26 summarises what we've been hearing from God in this passage. Notice in verse 28 who it is that is saved from the judgement we all must face after physical death (v27). Those who are waiting eagerly for Jesus, longing for his presence, will see him face-to-face when he appears for a second time and brings them salvation. Then, they will know in full, not in part.

*What do you long for?* If you long for the knowledge and personal presence of Jesus, then much more of that love, wonder and beauty is coming your way, in this life and the one to come! Let's be drawing near and entering into his relational presence more and more deeply during this time of lockdown restrictions.

